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Living with Latin America

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editorial

THE UNITED STATES IS REDISCOVERING LATIN AMERICA in this decade of the 60s, increasingly predicted to be the Decade of Development. As Arnold Toynbee says:

Our age will be well remembered not for its horrifying crimes or its astonishing inventions but because it is the first generation since the dawn of history in which mankind dared to believe it practical to make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race.

A great Argentine statesman expressed the ideal: "Let America stand for humanity."

In his March 13, 1961, address President Kennedy reminds us that 139 years ago the U.S. urged the independence and recognition of the Latin American Republics. Yet for years in recent history we have all too often pursued an approach marked by neglect and indifference. In a report William Benton wrote after a trip to Latin America with Adlai Stevenson, he begins: "Until the spring of 1960—the year both of us were sixty—neither Governor Stevenson nor I had ever been in the great cities of Latin America." Jaime Benitez in a paper published by the Center for Democratic Institutions describes as pathos this lack of direct contact so typical, he believes, of the elite of the U.S. But perhaps there is revolutionary change in the U.S. as well as in Latin America since in this new decade we are seeing with new eyes and new humanity our fellow Americans to the south.

The women of the churches are studying Latin America this year. **LAND OF ELDORADO**, the Mission Study Book, reminds us that the Act of Bogota in 1960 provided for "a common policy of economic and social development of the hemisphere and stressed the need to strengthen education, effect land reform, and modify the hemispheric extremes of wealth and poverty." Surely we *all* need to know more of this vast and varied continent. These twenty republics, their people, problems, culture, and aspirations open up new vistas for the mind. Our **SOCIAL ACTION** writers for this month discuss cogently and with clarity these central concerns. We trust that many churches and social action groups will study and act on these key issues that face us in the U.S. in our **LIVING WITH LATIN AMERICA** as neighbors and children of one God.

U. S. foreign policy in Latin America



The foreign policy of a world power such as the United States toward a vast geographical area beset by tensions and pressures—such as Latin America—is, ideally, a composite of political, economic and psychological attitudes, synchronized and coordinated to form an efficient and flexible whole.

But such perfect and ideal policies rarely, if ever, exist, and what is known generically as the United States foreign policy in Latin America is still far from having acquired a firm and recognizable shape. In the hands of the Kennedy Administration, this policy remains in the formative stages as it seeks to find a full-bloomed and consistent expression in the face of multifarious pressures emanating from Cuba and the Caribbean, from the restlessness of Central and South America, from inter-

By Tad Szulc, Washington Correspondent for THE NEW YORK TIMES and Author of NEW TRENDS IN LATIN AMERICA.

tested groups at home and, finally, from the interplay of forces in the East-West Cold War.

Need for basic guidelines

Though a convincing argument can be constructed to prove that a perfectly integrated policy in Latin America is not really possible because of the continuing and dramatic shifts in the fast-changing situation—and the consequent need for improvised Administration responses on a multiplicity of levels—it can be said that every policy requires certain constants to serve as its basic guidelines. Latin American policy, of course, is not an exception.

By and large, the policy followed by the United States in Latin America in the post-war years lacked these constants and guidelines. Uncharitably, it can even be said that no policy, in the reasonably accepted sense of the word, existed at all during that period, except for occasional improvisations and the immensely belated effort to build the framework for a policy of social and economic assistance through the Act of Bogota, in September 1960, as the Eisenhower Administration prepared to walk off the stage.

1946-60 APPROACH

The approach of the United States to Latin America between 1946 and 1960—and the use of the word “policy” is carefully avoided here—was essentially negative in that it primarily preached anti-communism as a self-contained objective. It was essentially based on expediencies that were seldom thought through with any care, although it had moments of insight and perception like the decision to aid the revolutionary government of Bolivia after 1952. It was rich in generously distributed platitudes about the beauties of democracy, the appeal of the American Way of Life and of the investments of private capital, but it showed a Franciscan poverty of imagination and leadership in making them practicable in Latin America.

It is an accurate, if not a very original, statement to say that until Fidel Castro staged his revolution in Cuba, the United States took Latin America comfortably for granted, happily oblivious of the terrible social and political pressures that were being generated there daily by the material poverty and the psychological and spiritual anxieties of the restless populations.

Stability desired

In the political field, the United States was content to support or, at least, to tolerate the right-wing military dictatorships. The excuse was that these dictatorships held the Communists in check and provided a modicum of stability. So short-sighted was the attitude of Washington in these days that it did not seem to occur to what passed for the policy planners that the whole concept of the credibility of the United States as a champion of freedom and democracy was being shattered by the complaisant co-existence with the anti-democratic dictatorships. It was a time for political leadership that could have won Latin America's respect and following for the United States; but what was practiced instead was a policy of not upsetting the apple-cart, even if the apples were rotten.

The very real surge of nationalism—a worldwide and not just a Latin American phenomenon—was casually dismissed as either unimportant or Communist-inspired. The result, inevitably, was that the Communists and other extreme Leftists were allowed, unchallenged, to capture for their own ends the dynamics of nationalism.

Striking lack of understanding

In the economic field, the lack of understanding was just as striking as it was in the realm of politics. To be sure, loans were granted with reasonable frequency—they averaged nearly a half-billion dollars annually in the late 1950's—but much too often they were guided by political expediencies of the moment or by the desire to satisfy important economic groups in Latin America and at home. In terms of a comprehensive program, asked by Latin America, to raise the living standards of the crazily growing populations and to begin building a solid infrastructure, this assistance left precious little impact. Though, presumably, the Latin American ruling groups were just as much at fault in *their* approach to the basic problems, it was again a case of the United States' failure to display the leadership that was expected of it.

Not even the riots in Peru and Venezuela against Vice President Richard M. Nixon seemed to have communicated to Washington the sense of urgency in dealing with Latin America. Again, a great many platitudes—and truisms—were sounded

in Washington and, as a concession, the United States agreed to participate in the long-awaited Inter-American Development Bank. But subsequent appeals by Juscelino Kubitschek, then Brazil's president, for the United States to assume the leadership of a Hemisphere-wide program—he called it “Operation Pan American”—fell on deaf ears. A current explanation was that Brazil was merely trying to cash in on the situation for her own benefit.

Cuban revolution changed course of events

The Cuban revolution, victorious on January 1, 1959, was one of those historical events destined to change the course of affairs. When, weeks or months after Premier Fidel Castro assumed power, it became apparent that his revolution was fated to do more than simply to oust Fulgencio Batista, the dictator, and that, in fact, it was the greatest social upheaval in Latin America since the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the United States was shocked into the realization that Latin America was no longer the safe “backyard” of yesteryear.

In its closing days, the Eisenhower Administration thus acquired the understanding—or, the terribly belated awareness—that the old policies of expediencies and palliatives for Latin America would no longer do, that a brave new concept was urgently required if the United States was to keep some degree of influence in the Hemisphere. The Act of Bogota, recognizing for the first time the social needs of Latin America, was then hastily arranged. The Latin Americans showed pleasure; some said: “Thank you, Fidel Castro.”

This, then, was the backdrop for the entry of the Kennedy Administration onto the Latin American stage. The errors and the omissions of the past were its heritage as were the great continuing problems of the Cuban revolution and its impact on the rest of Latin America. Simultaneously, several countries, notably Brazil, were evolving toward “independent” foreign policies, abandoning their traditional reliance on United States leadership.

PERSPECTIVE ON NEW ADMINISTRATION

With the perspective that exists after the Kennedy Administration's first nine months in office, the judgment can be rendered that the United States has acquired a policy in Latin

America in economic and social matters. The same statement cannot be made, however, concerning political affairs in which an appreciable amount of confusion and many contradictions still prevail. Indeed, it could be said that, despite its new and enthusiastic approach to Latin America, the United States still has a great difficulty in offering a political leadership capable of inspiring the Hemispheric public opinion, and particularly its uncommitted liberal segments as well as the powerful anti-Communist leftist groupings.

The problem of Cuba, perhaps the most insoluble of all the United States' foreign problems, continues to throw its shadow over the whole spectrum of United States-Latin American relationships, constituting the key to the political situation in the Americas.

In a nutshell, therefore, the present United States policy in Latin America is incomplete and rather lopsided. While it presents the correct features in the economic realm, it lacks considerably in the political field. As such, it is still quite far from that ideal of a well-balanced, coordinated and synchronized policy that the current events in Latin America seem to require.

Policy pragmatic

Perhaps because of American thinking habits and policy traditions, the Latin American policy of the United States is heavily pragmatic and devoid of flexibility and elasticity. The case in point was the Administration's insistence to keep politics, in the larger sense of the word, out of the inter-American conference at Punta del Este, Uruguay, last August where Mr. Kennedy's program of the "Alliance for Progress" was launched as the keystone of economic and social development.

While such an attitude is commendable in terms of orderly thought procedures, it has the cardinal weakness of ignoring the fact that in Latin America—and, presumably, elsewhere in the world where the passions are rising—politics and economics are inseparable, that economics in the modern world are inspired by political ideologies and that, in sum, one cannot concentrate on one while overlooking the other.

The rationale behind the economic policy as embodied in the "Alliance for Progress" was that in helping Latin America to

build a new economy from scratch, reforming her antiquated and feudal social patterns and, ultimately, raising her living standards, the United States would discourage the spread of Cuban revolutionary influences and encourage evolution within a democratic framework. While not necessarily intended as a *quid pro quo*, the program was also expected to create a political climate in the Hemisphere favorable to collective action against the Communist regime of Cuba, under the aegis of the United States.

Growing political anxieties

There can be no argument with the soundness of that procedure—so far as it goes. But intended as it is as an essentially defensive policy, it falls dramatically short of filling with United States ideas the tremendous political vacuum now existing in Latin America. While, unquestionably, the massive and, for a change, rational programs of economic assistance inaugurated by the Kennedy Administration will play an important part in stabilizing the Latin American situation, they do not provide, of themselves, the answers to the growing political anxieties of the Hemisphere. It may thus be pertinent to quote here a remark made by Premier Castro in a conversation in Havana earlier this year to the effect that “if you Americans want to fight our ideas, you must fight yourselves in the field of ideas.”

The first problem faced by the United States in this area is that, by and large, it is still regarded as a defender of the status quo. As Under Secretary of State Chester Bowles, a man of ideas, commented after a recent trip through the world's underdeveloped regions, the Asians and the Africans as well as the Latin Americans do not really believe the United States protestations of belief in the modern revolutionary trends.

Democracy must be revitalized

The principles of Jeffersonian democracy, fully satisfactory to the Americans, no longer have the appeal of twenty years ago in the eyes of Latin Americans. Our insistence—in words—on human freedoms and democracy rings false and unconvincing to the millions of Latin Americans. That is not to say, however, that they should be discarded as principles. It means that they

must be revitalized and given a new strength to become once again believable and electrifying for the people who are in a dramatic search for new directions. In short, a credible answer must be provided to the question that is being asked with increased frequency in Latin American universities and other places where the present and the future are being debated, "Why should we follow the United States?"

Admittedly, the answers to these questions are not easy and there is no patented formula to cover them. But they may be found in time—if enough time is indeed left—in certain public postures of the United States that will create the impression that United States leadership is not only politically and morally acceptable, but actually desirable.

Economic posture in "Alliance for Progress"

In the economic field, this point is being made through the "Alliance for Progress," an immensely ambitious project calling for a total investment of twenty billion dollars in ten years, with more than one-half of it coming from the United States. The good intentions of the United States were proven even before the "Alliance" began functioning as a comprehensive program as the Kennedy Administration assigned Latin America nearly one billion dollars in aid between March and October, 1961. Aside from the financial rescue operation for Brazil—a special type of undertaking—most of the funds went into rational and wealth or welfare-generating projects, like industry, roads, land settlement and communications. The toughness of Washington in demanding that the Latin American countries engage in social and financial reform steps—that, in fact, they help themselves—as a condition for help, has already antagonized certain traditional economic groups, but it has created a favorable impact among the younger people who soon will be governing the Hemisphere.

Political posture less clear

But the political posture of the United States has not yet created that same impact. A part of the problem was the United States-backed invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro rebels on April 17, 1961, which led many thoughtful Latin Americans to accept the Communist and the *Fidelista* claim that Washington had

tried to strike at the social conquests of the Cuban revolution. The excellent "White Paper" on Cuba, issued just before the invasion and in which the United States set out its position on the Cuban case, was never properly distributed in Latin America—not even the Cuban exiles' newspapers in Miami received a Spanish translation in time—and, therefore, much of its impact was lost. The technical mismanagement of the invasion operation likewise did little to increase the United States' prestige.

The Gordian knot in the Cuban situation remains the inability of the United States to persuade much of Latin America that its dispute with Havana is a Hemisphere-wide and not a bilateral issue. Simultaneously, the Latin American sentiment in key countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico is that the Cuban case is an internal problem for them, thus preventing any form of intervention at the risk of setting off domestic commotion. The recognized Communist domination of Cuba is not a helpful argument, either, in dealing with the Castro phenomenon.

Exciting ideas will fill void

Curiously, much of the Latin American feeling on the subject is based on the premise that the Cuban revolution must be preserved as a guarantee that the United States will not again forget Latin America. At the same time, the Cuban experience fills an emotional and a political gap in Latin America. It can be argued, therefore, that the appeal of the Cuban revolution will vanish if and when the United States provides its own brand of exciting ideas to fill this void.

In its efforts to proclaim its devotion to democracy, the United States finds itself hampered, however, by its close relationships with such right-wing or dictatorial regimes in Latin America as Guatemala, in the first instance, and Nicaragua and Paraguay in the second instance. Many Latin Americans see it as significant that these are the principal and most vocal supporters of a strong United States action against Cuba.

Strangely, though, the United States could find only reluctant support for its policies of pressuring the Dominican regime into speeding up its democratization procedures following the assassination, last May 30, of the old dictator, Generalissimo

Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina. In Latin America, where convenient double standards still prevail, such pressures were regarded as dangerous exercise in interventionism, even though the aim was to replace a dictatorship with democracy and political freedoms.

Personalities important

Personalities are, of course, important in formulating and projecting policies, and President Kennedy himself has played a highly positive role in emphasizing the new United States interest in Latin America. He has made a point of receiving for lengthy conferences visiting Latin American presidents, cabinet ministers and high officials. By installing a special assistant in charge of Latin American affairs at the White House, a young lawyer named Richard N. Goodwin, the President maintains himself constantly briefed on Hemispheric affairs. This arrangement also has the advantage for the Latin Americans of being able to cut through the red tape in solving problems with some of the other departments of the government, which are not yet quite as Hemisphere-minded as the White House.

High calibre of new ambassadors

While the State Department's approach to Latin America still remains on a somewhat hesitating and rather conservative level, President Kennedy has been fortunate in his ambassadorial appointments in the region. Drawn from the career foreign service and from private life, the new ambassadors in Latin America are, by and large, one of the best groups currently serving in any part of the world.

Because of the Latin American accent on personalities, their influence in conveying the United States' ideas and ideology to the countries where they are stationed can be extraordinary.

One of the continuing weaknesses, however, and one again relating to the field of ideas, is the propaganda operation of the United States Information Agency. There, the problem is two-fold: the refusal of Congress to appropriate enough funds to counteract the massive Communist and *Fidelista* propaganda onslaught, and the acute shortage of perceptive, imaginative men to direct the United States program.

U. S. Propaganda impact limited

With few exceptions, therefore, the United States propaganda impact on Latin America is extremely limited, although a strong program would be, logically, a vital follow-up in the political field for the "Alliance for Progress." One of the outstanding victims of the bureaucratic paralysis affecting some agencies of the government, the USIA is not equipped in any way to play its part in the battle of ideas in Latin America. It is, then, one of the key structural weaknesses of the United States policy in the Hemisphere.

Lack of funds and lack of imagination in the Information Agency are thus conspiring to dilute the United States impact on Latin America at this crucial time. Cultural programs, immensely important in the Hemisphere, are a rarity in terms of sending out first-rate musicians, orchestras or theatrical and ballet groups to tour the region. United States intellectuals, writers and artists who could play a major role in interpreting modern American thought are conspicuous by their absence in Latin America. It is easier to secure a \$50,000,000 loan for, say, Bolivia or Venezuela, than to obtain the financing of an orchestra's tournée.

Because of the confusion reigning in the information program, no funds can be found to keep alive certain worthy Spanish-language publications circulating in Latin America but another agency had money to finance a Cuban exile periodical which strongly attacked the Administration in Washington. After dismantling to a large extent for bureaucratic reasons a special USIA operation concentrating on Cuba, the Voice of America was forced to fill up with music precious hours of broadcasts beamed to the Caribbean because not enough programs could be put together.

IN CONCLUSION

To conclude, it can be said that, with all the good will at the high levels, the United States is currently operating a half-policy in Latin America—efficient in the economic sphere but inadequate in the field of ideas. It is, of course, a vast improvement over the pre-Kennedy period, but obviously it is not enough as time may be running out for the United States in the Western Hemisphere.

Social and economic priorities in Latin America

One is tempted, when looking at the needs of our Latin American neighbors, to brush aside the concept of "priorities" and say with all possible energy and emphasis: "Everything must be done at once!"

Social reform or bloodshed predicted

I should like to quote a public figure who has followed Latin American affairs closely for many years: "There is a growing spirit of revolution in Latin America. . . . Either there must be rapid, sound social reform through peaceful means or there will be bloodshed in country after country. . . . The masses of the people want change and they want it now."

In case Pogo's Jack Acid Society wants to hunt down and blacklist the author of these lines, he will be found in the office of the president of one of our oldest and most respected universities, Johns Hopkins. His name is Milton Eisenhower!¹

The messages of President Kennedy are filled with the same sense of urgency. Even the State Department, so often attacked as the most moss-backed organization in our governmental structure, last year issued a brochure on "The Land Problem in the Americas" by the then Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Lester D. Malloy.² May I offer a few quotations:

The issue of "land reform" or "agrarian reform" . . . is unquestionably one of the most burning issues in the world today and is at the heart of revolutionary movements in the Orient, the Middle East and Latin America.

The Communists' championship of the "land reform" movement has tended to give the term a vaguely Communistic

By Clarence O. Senior, Professor of Sociology, Brooklyn College, City University of New York. (An address using this material was delivered at the World Order and United Nations Seminar of the CCSA, October 17, 1961.)

connotation. This circumstance has been exploited by enemies of the movement, particularly the great land holders abroad who have for centuries resisted any reduction in their privileged status and are deaf to all arguments that they stand to lose everything, soon, if they do not cooperate in promoting orderly reform.

Experience of history cited

Malloy then sketches Roman land tenure experience. He recalls that Pliny the Elder, in the first century A.D. predicted that "Latifundia [large landed estates] will be the ruin of Italy." The experience of Spain was similar, both at home after the reconquest from the Moors and in her colonies. Today latifundists hold millions of acres of land in Latin America and often work, if at all, in an inefficient, wasteful manner. Many of them hold land for the social status it gives them in an essentially feudalistic society. Others hold land for speculation based on the idea that Latin America's high rate of population increase will push up the price.

A few statistics will illustrate the point.

. . . 2/10 of 1% of the farms in Guatemala cover 40.8% of the total privately owned acreage. . . . In Argentina 500 owners hold 18% of the farmland. In Chile 1% control 43% of the land. In Paraguay only 5.2% of the farm units are larger than 125 acres; yet this 5.2% accounts for 93.8% of the total acreage. In Bolivia until recently 6.3% of the total farm units covered 91.9% of the total.

The economic and social consequences of ownership of such extensive areas by a few persons or families are indicated by an unobtrusive but meaningful sentence in the fourth annual report of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development:

The maintenance in a number of countries of inefficient and oppressive systems of land tenure militates against increase in agricultural output and improvement in the general standard of living.³

¹ *New York Times*, Jan. 31, 1961.

² Department of State Publication 7112, released December 1960. 17 pp.

³ Washington, 1949, p. 7.

Per capita food production falls

When economists, especially bankers, use the word "inefficient," perhaps we need no illustrations or examples. This is their field. It is worth noting, however, that agricultural production in Latin America is simply not keeping up with the growth of the population. A recent U.S. Senate report pointed out that food production per capita had fallen in the two decades between 1934-38 and 1956-58.⁴

It is to the adjective "oppressive" in the International Bank report that I wish to return. If we would turn our minds back to our studies of European history and recall the descriptions of feudalism, we would begin to get the realities of many parts of Latin America into focus. The relation between man and master is one of complete dependence. Actually, the *hacendado* [landlord] many times does not really think of his serf as a member of the same human species. Especially in the Andean regions, the Indian is often looked upon as a subhuman being to be maintained on whatever level will keep the creature working. Zapata, the great Mexican agrarian leader, was first aroused to protest because he was shocked at the luxury in which horses were housed and fed as contrasted with the unspeakable hacienda huts for the peasants. Bolivia, until its agrarian revolution in 1953, saw the peasant required to doff his cap in the presence of the *hacendado* and kiss his hand when he was paid his pitiful wages.

Rural feudalism hampers development

"Inefficient" and "oppressive" are justified adjectives, but there is more to be said about rural feudalism. Wherever it is still powerful it seriously hampers economic and social development. It is basically opposed to such fundamentals of either democracy or economic development as education for the people who work the land. "They plow just as well as if they could read," it was once explained to me in Peru. The *hacendado*, if he produces an export crop, may be interested in roads or railroads to the chief port, but not in "farm-to-market" roads which encourage local development. He can light his own *casa grande* and his farm buildings with a gasoline motor; he is not interested in rural electrification. He has his own private or

⁴U.S. Senate Committee on Government Operations. "Health in the Americas and the Pan American Health Organization," May 9, 1960, pp. 16-17.

public sources of credit; he does not believe in credit for the small farmer. Examples of his malignant influence could be extended at length. Obviously, he also plays an important role in politics; adequate land taxation, for example, is bitterly opposed by the *latifundista*.⁵

Unwise policies of land subdivision

Unfortunately, large-scale landownership is only one aspect of the agricultural problem. Many areas are beset by the innumerable problems which arise from minifundia—the tiny pieces or strips into which the land has been cut by unwise land tenure policies. Haiti, which is sometimes referred to as “Asia in the Americas,” is one of the appalling examples. High rates of population growth lead to further and further subdivision of the tiny farms, which are pushed farther and farther up the mountains. Intensive cultivation plus tropical rains soon result in the patches of bare rock which can be found in Haiti and other hilly, tropical or subtropical, overpopulated areas in Latin America.

A rough idea of the opposite end of the scale from the *latifundia* is given by the statistics showing that 72.6% of all land holdings are in units of less than 50 acres but that these owners hold only 3.7% of the farming area. Many of these farms, if not further subdivided, might make a contribution to national production but farm credit systems generally are quite primitive with rates as high as 10 to 25% per month. When the *latifundista* runs the country, such systems are likely to remain ineffectual for the small farmer.

Arable land limited

But these critically serious limitations on the expansion of agriculture in Latin America are still only part of the story. Contrary to the picture usually painted, Latin America is not a naturally rich area. This is particularly true in regard to usable land. Less than 5% of its area is cultivated at present, compared with 7% for the world as a whole and 18% for the United States. Mexico has found that the chief brake on its land distribution in recent years has been a shortage of usable land.

⁵ For an able account of the role played by the Mexican Revolution in clearing the way for economic development, see James G. Maddox, “Economic Growth and Revolution in Mexico,” *Land Economics*, August 1960, pp. 266-78.

It is now expanding its land resources by extremely expensive irrigation work in the desert areas and by drainage in the rainy tropical sections. Deserts, mountains, swamps and virtually impenetrable jungles make up much of Latin America's surface. Most of the really good land in the entire area of the 20 republics lies in Argentina. Over a third of the total cultivated land is contained in that one nation. Mexico, Chile, Uruguay and Southern Brazil, have about 47% of the total. Brazil's famous Amazon valley takes up about one million square miles, with not more than 1% arable. Fifteen countries remain, with about 20% of the cultivated land. The five worst off are Bolivia, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela, with under 3% of their land surface suitable for cultivation.

And in 16 of the 20 countries over half of the labor force is in agriculture, including four of the five in which only 3% of the land is arable.

Land reform, a high priority

In sum, one of the high priorities is land reform. It is obviously exceedingly complex. There is danger of oversimplification. My book, *LAND REFORM AND DEMOCRACY*,⁶ indicates how very complicated is action to effect land reform.

Expansion of education needed

It was tempting to start with something even more basic than land reform and certainly less dramatic—education. The most obvious starting place is the terribly high rate of illiteracy: 43% for Latin America as a whole. Only three republics—Argentina, Chile and Uruguay—and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have illiteracy rates as low as 20% of their population. Haiti, with 90% illiterate; Guatemala, with 70%; Bolivia, with 69%, occupy the other end of the scale. The biggest nation, Brazil, tips the scale at 51% illiterate, while Mexico, the second most populous, still has almost half its people illiterate after years of enlightened efforts.

School programs not geared to problems of people

Not only are there too few schools and too few teachers, but relatively little progress has been made in gearing the schools

⁶ Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1958, 269 pp.

to the solution of local, regional and national problems; in making the classroom work and reading meaningful in the lives of the people themselves. The spell of European classicism still holds most of the teachers and administrators enthralled. Even the great Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos, when made head of the national educational system after the Revolution, first decreed the reading of the Greek poets and philosophers in the elementary schools. The needs of the workers and the peasants soon overcame the ideas of the classicist and John Dewey's idea of a community-centered school began to influence education. Probably only in Chile, however, has much progress been made along the same lines.

Housing high on priority list

Housing is another item with a well-deserved high-priority rating. Recent careful estimates give 20 million dwellings out of 31 million in Latin America as falling below minimum standards for human habitation. No one who has walked through the slums of Port-au-Prince, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Santiago or several other capitals is likely ever to be completely free from nightmares. And the Pan American Union, which has been working hard on housing programs, estimates that the construction industry is at present producing only one-third of the dwelling units needed for the annual increase in population. There is therefore no margin at all for replacing the shacks, tents, and caves in which so many hundreds of thousands of persons now exist.

Medical care inadequate

Reams of statistics could be cited to prove the horrors of illness and early death which plague most of our southern neighbors. A baby born in Brazil is $6\frac{1}{2}$ times as likely to die in his first year as a child born in the United States. For Latin America as a whole, the chances are about $4\frac{1}{5}$ times as great. Latin America has 54 doctors per 100,000 people; we in the United States have 135. Haiti has only 9; Guatemala only 15; Bolivia only 25 per 100,000.

The bitter irony of improving health and sanitary facilities is reflected in the experience of the falling per capita food supplies and the deficiencies in education and housing. The im-

mediate result is a further increase in an already high rate of population increase.⁷

Population growth outpacing economic growth

About 200 million people live in Latin America now and somewhat over 5 million are being added each year. At the highest rate of natural increase of any of the world's major regions, 2.5%, the population will double in about 28 to 29 years. As President Kennedy pointed out on March 13, 1961, "Population growth is outpacing economic growth—low living standards are even further endangered."⁸

What hope for the future?

Is there hope? We must not allow ourselves to doubt that there is hope. We who believe that democracy can win in its struggle with the inhuman forces of totalitarianism must strain every muscle to see to it that the United States does not falter in its attempts to help the Latin Americans help themselves. Our government recently has made real strides forward; it must not turn back to the old days of "the big stick," either openly or covertly. The push we have given to the arms race in Latin America must be reversed. The favors we have shown the dictatorships in the past must not be repeated; as Luis Muñoz Marín of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has said, "Let us have a formal, diplomatic handshake for the dictators but a warm *abrazo* for the democratic forces."

We have got off to a good start with the "*alianza para progreso*." If we really make it an alliance in which we march forward shoulder to shoulder, we may be able to arouse the hopes, the aspirations, the wills of the peoples of Latin America to overcome their local obstacles. President Kennedy struck the correct note, it seems to me, in his March 13 message: "Let us once again awaken our American Revolution until it guides the struggles of people everywhere—not with an implication of force or fear—but the rule of courage and freedom and hope for the future of man."

⁷ See, for example, Moisés Poblete Troncoso, "Too Many People: Population Growth in Latin America Accentuates Food and Housing Problems," *Américas*, September 1960, pp. 11-15; and "Latin America, a Decade of Decision," *Population Bulletin*, April 1961, pp. 17-39.

⁸ An impressive study of the manner in which population growth hampers industrial development, with which I have not been able to deal here, is Abraham Jaffe, *People, Jobs and Economic Development*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960, 250 pp.



Modern Latin America: Continent in Ferment, by Lewis Hanke. Vol. I, *Mexico and the Caribbean*; Vol. II, *South America*. Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1959, \$1.25 each.

For the seasoned traveler as well as for the reader making his first reconnaissance of the vast and variegated region we call Latin America, these two paperback surveys by an eminent historian and bibliographer furnish an excellent guide. Each contains introductory essays on the countries of the region, with a remarkable condensation of fact and interpretation. Nearly half of each book is given to a representative sampling of points of view on basic problems, including statements by Latin American leaders which are not otherwise available in translation. To find out the whole, there is a comprehensive bibliography.

Dr. Hanke more than succeeds in his modestly stated purpose of deepening our understanding of the current of change in the

area—"a vigorous and sometimes violent movement that will undoubtedly change the human landscape there during the coming years."

Social Change in Latin America Today: Its Implications for United States Policy, by Richard N. Adams and others. New York: Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1960, \$5.00.

In this important study, six social scientists undertake to provide some new markers for the human landscape in the other Americas and to chart out certain directions for United States policy makers based on the anthropologist's ability to "get into the skins of strange peoples . . . to free himself of the assumptions which make him a member of his own tribe at home."

The authors have been intimately identified with their subjects—Allen Holmberg with the hopeful Cornell experiment in community development among the highland Indians of Peru, Charles Wagley with years of field work in Brazil, Oscar Lewis in Mexico. Their essays, together with the chapters on Guatemala and Bolivia by Mr. Adams and Richard Patch respectively, are

Olive Holmes Blum, Consultant in International Relations for the National Board of the YWCA and author of EXPLORING THE NEW LATIN AMERICA, Study-Program Guide for YWCAs of the U.S.A.

preceded by a chapter by John Gillin, "Some Signposts for Policy," which analyzes the make up and values of the new middle groups in Latin America. (The term *middle class* is rigorously avoided because of the economic connotations it carries in Western Europe and Anglo-America.)

This is a "class in search of a future," as Mr. Gillin describes it, unconsolidated and lacking a sense of belonging, most susceptible to change, defensive and suspicious of the United States, yet aware—some of them—that a "mutual give and take between the two great cultural areas of the Western Hemisphere does not inevitably mean the stamping out of the virtues of either." In a sensitive introduction the late Lyman Bryson added:

Our government is dominated by American middle-class values, and for it to deal generously and effectively with any government which speaks honestly for a new middle mass which holds these different values will take patient translation of cultural assumptions and a tolerance too deep for condescension.

Latin American Issues: Essays and Comments, edited by Albert O. Hirschman. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1961. Paperback, \$1.45.

The attitudes of the new middle groups are also explored in this study organized by The Twentieth Century Fund as a forerunner of a major inquiry into Latin American economic

policies. There are nine contributors to the volume, mostly economists, three of whom are Latin Americans. All of them essentially agree with Mr. Hirschman's statement that what Latin Americans aspire to most, over and beyond rising living levels, is a "new ability to strike out on one's own, politically, economically and intellectually." Most would also probably agree that the solutions to their problems will be emphatically different from ours. But there is real disagreement on the implications of these trends for United States policy and future inter-American ties.

For those who have some previous preparation, this makes for stimulating reading. The chapters on "The Latin American Style and the New Social Forces," and "Inter-American Relations—Abrazo vs. Coexistence" are especially recommended. Some of the other topics covered are ideologies of economic development, inflation, the Common Market, and land reform.

The U.S., Cuba, and Latin America, by Jaime Benitez. *An Occasional Paper on the Free Society* published by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. New York: The Fund for the Republic, Inc., 1961. Single copy free on request.

The Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico argues per-

uasively that the United States must identify itself positively with independently motivated movements for social and economic reform "instead of letting situations occur, as they have in Cuba, in distasteful forms, about which it can then do nothing."

Making an Inter-American Mind.
By Harry Bernstein. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1961, \$5.50.

This is an opportune time, with nationalism and its twin, anti-Yankeeism rampant in Latin America, to be reminded of the good and solid tradition of inter-American cultural contacts through the years. Mr. Bernstein calls this community of scholarly and appreciative contact the inter-American mind and dates its appearance back to the era "before there was a nation and a national interest." He discerns three abid-

ing interests in inter-American history, in addition to an early Puritan proselytizing mission: commerce, political ideas, and science, especially the earth sciences and ethnology. The first three examples of early North American book publishing relating to Latin America were Cotton Mather's *La Religión Pura* (the first book printed in Spanish), a Peruvian "how-to-do-it" on mining technology translated into German for Pennsylvania miners, and Noel's Spanish Grammar.

MAKING AN INTER-AMERICAN MIND communicates the intellectual excitement of mutual discovery on the part of Americans North and South, excitement "unruffled by Manifest Destiny, annexationism, and other dangers to hemisphere good will." One could wish the author had carried his history beyond 1900 and so included the mass media. But that is another story.

We proudly proclaim the advent of a competitor to SOCIAL ACTION—CHURCH AND COMMUNITY, the bi-monthly magazine of The Department of Public Welfare, United Church of Christ in the Philippines, P.O. Box 718, Manila. It is edited by none other than Fern Babcock Grant (Mrs. Alex J.), formerly editor of SOCIAL ACTION; so it must be good. Among the current issues are:

- "Christians Participate in National Politics"
- "Responsible Family Living"
- "The Social Witness of the Church"
- "Community Development in Rural Areas"

As is characteristic of competitors, it is underselling us! Because of relatively lower printing costs it is available at one dollar (U.S. currency) per year. One dollar cannot be better used than in this promising venture in the Philippines. Congratulations to the Editor.



"The bulk of the people of the world live and work for revolution and change. We who enjoy our leisure and security are not in tune with these new voices; we and they speak a different language. Sometimes I am afraid that people in rich countries have so completely forgotten what it is like to be poor that we no longer feel or talk with the less lucky. This we must learn to do."

—JUSTICE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

Social action committee

The churches participating in the educational emphasis on Latin America might undertake a "crash" program for the "social action" month of February. Careful planning by the Social Action Committee of the church should inform each department of the church where adequate resource materials may be found to carry out its individual program. The Social Action Committee will want to devote several meetings to such planning and to discussion of the problems described in this issue of *SOCIAL ACTION*, in the September issue of the *UNITED CHURCH*

HERALD, and in the following publications of the Foreign Policy Association—World Affairs Center, 345 E. 46th Street, New York 17, N. Y.: *The Americas in Jeopardy—Great Decisions of 1961*, 20¢; *Intercom—Focus on Foreign Aid*, February 1961, 75¢; *Intercom—Focus on Latin America*, March 1961, and *Intercom—Leaders Manual*, October 1961.

This Committee could assemble a shelf of reading and educational material of interest to all groups in the church. On a bulletin board they could post the CCSA's list of "Educational Material on Latin America" (available from the Council for 5¢), current news items, and cartoons.

For use in a Sunday congregational meeting, a two-page mimeographed folder could be prepared on the mutual need for the U.S. and the Latin American countries to strengthen our hemispheric unity through understanding of our common interests and shared aspirations.

The congregation

The minister might preach one or two sermons on "The Mission of the Protestant Churches in Latin America" and "Our Christian Involvement in the Revolution of Human Liberty." A Sun-

By Mrs. William A. Gordon, Noroton,
Conn. Mrs. Gordon is United Nations
observer for the CCSA.

any evening program for the congregation might include a film showing such as "The Golden Egg," free loan from UNESCO Public Liaison Division, United Nations—28 minutes—on the UN's Educational Center at Cuernavaca, Mexico, and "Grant of Peace"—30 minutes—free, loan from the Jewish Chataqua Society, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y.

The films could be followed by a panel discussion by members of the various departments of the church participating in this study. An exhibition of Latin American art and handicraft would give color and interest. Latin American food for refreshments might be a "conversation piece" to sociability.

The missionary committee

How is our own denomination responsibly relating to work in Latin America? The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y., has several booklets at 25¢ each—*Missionary Movement of the Non-Protestant Groups in Latin America*; *Christian Responsibility in Latin America's Emerging Industrial Society*; *The Evangelical Church in Inter-Church Relationships*; and *Mission to Missions in Latin America*.

Women's groups

The United Church Women as part of their World Community

Day program this year are organizing the collection of school supplies and the preparation of school bags and school outfits for Latin American children. A pamphlet with program suggestions, discussion guide and reading list "Education, Women and the Church in Other Americas" can be purchased from the Publication and Distribution Department of the National Council of Churches for 35¢.

Men's groups

In many communities, there are businessmen, educators, Latin American students in the schools or colleges who might be available for speaking. Speakers may also be secured from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1818 H Street, N.W., Washington 25, D. C. (Travel expenses paid by Bank, no fee.) Address requests to Director of Information. The International Labor Organization, 917 Fifteenth St., N.W., Washington, D. C., has a similar service. Write to Mr. Richard W. Balentine, Public Information. A panel of church people who have lived or worked in these countries also might provide an interesting program.

The couples club

Suppers of Latin American food might precede a film showing, a musical program or an evening of Latin American dancing. This age group is familiar

with both Latin American records and dances such as "The Mexican Hat Dance." Such a cultural activity might be followed by more serious discussion or a lecture on subjects suggested below.

Youth groups

Youth might find out about the goal of UNESCO for a primary education for every Latin American child, UNICEF's and the World Health Organization's efforts for the eradication of disease and the development of child care centers; loans from the World Bank for the Latin American countries for transportation, industry, electric power and agricultural development; the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America in surveying needs and developing regional cooperation in trade, water resources, power energy and other areas of economic growth.

Questions for discussions: What is the United States doing to participate in the UN's food and agricultural "Freedom from Hunger Campaign?" What is President Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress?" The Organization of American States? The United States International Development Fund? Why is Social Revolution of first importance to the people of this area? Money for UNESCO certificates or bonds might be earned by the group and donated to a special educational project.

Church school

Delightful, colorful and fascinating literature and posters may be obtained by writing the United States Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, New York.

The "Hi-Neighbor" books have stories, facts, fun projects, recipes, games and music with imaginative suggestions for programs. Church families might be encouraged to use them in the home. Books one and two are \$1.00. Books three and four are \$1.50.

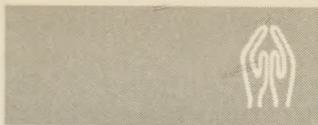
"Children of the Americas—UNICEF," is a photographic report of handicaps faced by children of Latin America.

Children might make a project of a display of flags of these countries. A sheet of United Nations Flags can be purchased at the UN Bookstore for 35¢.

In your libraries are children's books with stories about the Latin American Community.

Of special note

Eric Severeid has written, "America has not fundamentally changed. Ours remains preeminently the land of 'the great experiment'; for us, life is always marked 'unfinished business.'" And Dean Rusk reminds us that "what we decide now will determine whether the second half of the twentieth century records a plunge into chaos or a steady ascent into more effective coherence and order."



the needs of the people

The prevalent need of the peoples of Latin America, as elsewhere in our world, is for relief from poverty, ignorance, and disease. Although many nations of this hemisphere are waging an effective battle against these evils, they greatly need support and assistance from others. Let us consider our responsibility in the light of the Parable of the Man Who Seeded the Field. (Read Luke 16:19-31.)

hymn

"Hail to the Lord's
Anointed" or
"The Voice of God is Calling"

the Protestant witness

The Protestant Church in most Latin American countries, though growing, is small in membership, limited in its resources, threatened by an unfriendly environment, and sometimes handicapped by an individualism that is only gradually yielding to a sense of social responsibility. The urgency of its witness is akin to that of which Paul speaks. (Read Romans 10:11-17.)

Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director,
Council for Christian Social Action.

The assertion of its faith by a persecuted church is given effective expression in the Hymn of the Hungarian Galley Slaves—"Lift Thy Head, O Zion Weeping."

The bond of fellowship

The early church showed forth both the community and the responsibility of those who are united in Christ. (Read Acts 2:42-47 and I John 3:16-18.)

A litany

O God, who hast made of one all peoples to dwell on the earth that they may find Thee and be found of Thee, we give Thee thanks for our neighbors, the people of Latin America.

For the mingling in this hemisphere of people of diverse race, culture, language, and tradition,

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

For our own enrichment by our commerce with them, bringing us food, fiber, precious minerals, and the products of their art,

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

For their struggle against poverty and disease, for their resistance to despotic rulers and bad government, for their achievement and promise in spite of setbacks,

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

For the evangelical witness to Thy saving grace; for churches, hospitals, schools, and ministries that proclaim Thy love; for faithful pastors, earnest teachers, and courageous people,

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

That the Protestant church may grow in understanding and power, proclaiming the full riches of the counsels of God, so that it may offer fellowship and light to those who labor with hand and brain, in field and mine, in industry and in government, to the enrichment of these and all lands,

We humbly beseech Thee, Good Lord.

That the Church of Rome, rising above past errors, may be led to discharge more fully its responsibility and impart its best heritage to its people and to the lands in which they live,

We humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

That governments and peoples

may with greater devotion strive to combat the ills from which men suffer and serve the ends of justice, peace, and the common good,

We humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

O God ever faithful, who hast taught us that of those who have been given much will much be required, grant to the people of the United States of America and to the churches in our land a quickened vision of our task and of our opportunity to give of ourselves and of our means for the healing of the nations, for the welfare of the peoples, and for the upbuilding of Thy Church; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

"Eternal God Whose Power Upholds," or

"Turn Back, O Man, Forswear Thy Foolish Ways"

NOTE: All hymns are found in both *The Hymnal of the Evangelical and Reformed Church* and in the *Pilgrim Hymnal* (1958).
